

spector of customs, who had full power, and whose duty it was, if there had been fraud, at once to suspend the officer. In his opinion there was not fraud in the sense in which the hon. gentleman is speaking.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Will the hon. gentleman tell me whether the undervaluation was intentional or unintentional?

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. I think it was unintentional. My reason for saying so is that the chief inspector of customs, if he had thought it was intentional, was in duty bound to suspend the officer, he was under express instructions from the commissioner when sent there to do that; and when he did not do it, I feel convinced that he was convinced that there was not fraud in the sense in which the hon. gentleman means it; and when the chief inspector takes that view, I am prepared to follow him.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The hon. gentleman is going a long way around. He has not given me his opinion yet. He hides himself behind the opinion of the inspector of customs. What I want to ask the Minister of Customs again is, whether he thinks there could have been an unintentional undervaluation of \$15,000 on that boat?

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. I think it possible, yes.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The hon. gentleman's judgment, then, I must say, is a very generous and kindly one towards those who make errors of undervaluation. I must accept the hon. gentleman's parliamentary statement; but, at the same time, if it were outside, I would say that the hon. gentleman knows there was a fraud, and could not help knowing it.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. The people outside would not pay any attention to that statement.

Mr. MONTAGUE. That may be; but, if you put before any business man in the province of Ontario the bare statement of facts as produced in these papers, that this boat was valued at \$10,000 by Mr. Davis, advised by some of the officers of the boat, and I have no doubt assisted by Mr. Wade, who was paid for the work he undertook in regard to this, when the valuation ought to have been at least \$25,000, and when good men say it ought to have been \$50,000, I believe the most ordinary business man of the country would admit that there has been a fraud, and a great big fraud, as an hon. gentleman suggests.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. Then, you condemn the chief inspector?

Mr. MONTAGUE. I condemn not only the chief inspector, but every gentleman who had anything to do with the transaction who has not done his work properly. The inspector may have done his work properly,

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of course, but the minister cannot hide behind him. I do not rise for the purpose of condemning anybody unnecessarily; but I say that when the chief inspector reported that there was an undervaluation of \$15,000, it was his duty to report specially how that had occurred, if he could find it out, whether it was done intentionally or unintentionally, whether a fraud had been perpetrated; and that he has not done in any shape or form. Whether it was done intentionally or unintentionally and whether a fraud had been perpetrated or not, he did not report to the minister in any shape or form. The hon. gentleman says he got a verbal report, but we have no such report before this House. We have the report which my hon. friend from Pictou has read, which says that there was undervaluation, and that he increased the valuation to \$25,000, imposed a slight penalty and then let the matter at rest. He will find cases in the history of his department in which seizures was made for much slighter offences. He will find confiscation of articles in which the undervaluation was much less than in this instance. The hon. gentleman has not one excuse to make for the easy treatment he meted out to these men. The only excuse that can be made is that Mr. Wade was acting for them, influencing perhaps the Collector of Customs, and the friend and appointee of hon. gentlemen opposite.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). The hon. gentleman has waxed exceedingly warm and made very many violent statements, but I do not think he has at all strengthened the case which the hon. member for Pictou submitted to the House. The case is very simple. The hon. gentleman draws certain conclusions from the evidence, and one is that Mr. Wade,—a gentleman for whom he appears to have very special affection—was present acting as attorney for the parties during the entry and registration of the vessel. Well, there is not a scintilla of evidence to justify that statement. There is not a line to show that Mr. Wade was either present or that he advised any of the parties when that vessel was entered and the duty paid. Mr. Wade comes upon the scene many months afterwards. After Mr. McMichael had investigated the matter, Mr. Wade comes in making a protest. For the first time, he appears on August 16, 1899, whereas the vessel was purchased and entered in during the March previous.

The hon. gentleman, not having any case, and not daring to attack Mr. Davis, dragged in an imaginary opponent. Supposing we withdraw that imaginary opponent, that man who was not there at all, what is the hon. gentleman going to say then? The other inference he draws is that because there was over valuation, there must necessarily have been fraud. The hon. gentleman may draw any conclusion he pleases,